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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/041,678	01/07/2002	Gilbert Wolrich	10559-610001 / P12849	2963

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EXAMINER

CHACE, CHRISTIAN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2187

DATE MAILED: 06/16/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/041,678

Applicant(s)

WOLRICH ET AL.

Examiner

Christian P. Chace

Art Unit

2187

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 January 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 07 January 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____. 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Chang et al (US Patent # 5,634,015).

With respect to independent claims 1 and 16, receiving a request to perform an enqueue or a dequeue operation with respect to a particular queue is disclosed in column 17, line 7. A queue descriptor (buffer pointer) is disclosed in column 17, lines 45-47. A cache is disclosed in figure 1 as local memory #30. Referencing a corresponding queue descriptor stored in a cache in a processor's memory controller logic to execute the operations, the queue descriptor specifying a structure of the queue is disclosed in column 17, lines 20-51 as the BTE, which is stored in the local memory and references corresponding descriptors.

With respect to claims 2, 10, and 17, maintaining a list of addresses of a subset of queue descriptors stored in memory is disclosed, again, as the BTE in column 17, lines 20-51. The list being stored in a content addressable memory, or CAM, is disclosed in column 11, line 17, which discloses that the GAM local memory #30 is indeed a CAM. Also, column 48, lines 57-59 reinforce the desirability of an associative memory, which is what a CAM is.

With respect to claims 3 and 18, storing in the cache a queue descriptor corresponding to each address in the list I disclosed in column 17, line 25.

With respect to claims 4, 11, and 19, "tracking" an address stored in the local memory is disclosed in column 18, lines 5-12, the address corresponding to a queue descriptor that was least recently used for an enqueue or dequeue operation, as discussed supra with respect to claims 1 and 16.

With respect to claims 5, 12, and 20, removing the LRU address from the list if the list lacks an entry corresponding to the queue specified by the request and replacing the removed address with an address corresponding to the specified queue is disclosed in column 2, lines 22-28.

With respect to claims 6, 13, and 21, issuing commands to the memory controller logic to return and fetch queue descriptors to and from the memory is disclosed in column 17, lines 35-45. Maintaining coherence between the queue descriptors in the cache and the list of addresses in the local memory (CAM) is performed through the 1:1 ratio of descriptors each having their own address, as disclosed in the cited passage.

With respect to claims 7 and 14, modifying the queue descriptor referenced by the enqueue or dequeue operation and returning the modified queue descriptors to memory from the cache is disclosed in column 17, lines 45-51. When a buffer goes from free buffer to allocated, the BTE information is "modified," or changed, and thereby re-entered into the BTE.

With respect to claims 8 and 23, executing an enqueue operation without waiting for completion of a previous operation is discussed in column 5, lines 26-29. Also,

column 16, line 38 discloses "multicast," which being multiple operations being performed at one time, reads on the instant claim as well. The passage recites, "Without waiting for sources" of new allocation, a new allocation being an enqueue operation.

With respect to independent claim 9, a memory to store queue descriptors is disclosed as PM #16 in figure 1, to which the BTE references queues. The BTE specifies the structure of the respective queues stored in PM #16 as they are allocated from the free buffer pool. A network processor is disclosed coupled to the memory as #22 in figure 1. A memory controller logic that includes a cache (#30) to store a subset of the queue descriptors (BTE) in the memory is disclosed as GAM #18 in figure 1 as well. A programming engine that accesses a list of addresses in the memory corresponding to the queue descriptors stored in the cache is disclosed as BTE, as discussed supra with respect to claims 1 and 16. The processor being configured to reference a corresponding queue descriptor in the cache in response to a request to perform an enqueue or dequeue operation with respect to a particular queue, also discussed with respect to claims 1 and 16, is disclosed in column 17, lines 45-47.


With respect to claim 15, the processor being configured to execute an enqueue operation without waiting for completion of a previous operation is disclosed supra with respect to claim 8. Doing so if the queue would otherwise be "unempty" upon completion of the dequeue operation is disclosed in column 20, lines 23-27.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christian P. Chace whose telephone number is 703.306.5903. The examiner can normally be reached on 9-4-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Donald Sparks can be reached on 703.308.1756. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703.305.3719 for regular communications and 703.305.3719 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703.305.3900.

Christian P. Chace 
DS/cpc
June 12, 2003


Donald Sparks
SPE, 2187